

With Nate Nanzer going public on the announcement of localization in season 3 of OWL, we need to NOT jump the gun on this change. It is a big step in the future of Esports, and will be a pivotal moment in this industry when we look back at it 20 years from now. That being said, let us take what Nate Nanzer words specifically.

Quote, "The [@overwatchleague](#) is coming home - and away! Starting in 2020, all Overwatch League teams will be playing in their home cities. We're super excited to see our original vision brought to life. Thanks to all of our fans for your amazing support!"

That is the stated comment. Now, what is NOT stated is the following:

Each team will play home games. How many, and will it be a true 50% of all games will be at home?

Will the season's length be affected to accommodate this localization?

What will the equipment usage be like? Will every city have their own set of equipment to practice and broadcast?

What will the season structure look like? Still 4, 5 week stages? Where will the stage playoffs be held?

All of these questions, and many more that I can't even think of, will need to be answered. That being said, there is a way for the league to run season 3 in a productive manner without killing their pocketbook, their investor's optimism, their player's desire to play, the fan's desire to watch the league, the local fan's desire to go to the games, the viewers online from not wanting to watch the games, and the TV audience who don't want to watch a game at 3 am because it is 5 pm local time for the game.

With all that stated, I have spent the last few weeks combining my knowledge of logistics, customs & visa experience, and overall marketing know how to put together a hypothetical way that OWL Season 3 could work in a financially viable way while being able to satisfy the will of a majority of the audiences that OWL would like to service. I have also provided pictures of a write up of what a theoretical season 3 would look like, assuming the model I am presenting is what is settled on.

Step 1, Background:

For a more in depth dive into this, please read my full essay which is pt. 1 [\[LINK\]](#).

TLDR:

Before season 3, OWL will change from a 2 division league to a 4 division league with 2 conferences, Atlantic and Pacific.

Atlantic North:

Toronto  
NYXL  
Boston  
London  
Paris

Atlantic South:

Fusion  
Washington Justice  
Atlanta  
Florida  
Houston

Pacific East:

Dallas

Valiant

Gladiators

Shock

Vancouver

Pacific West:

Hunters

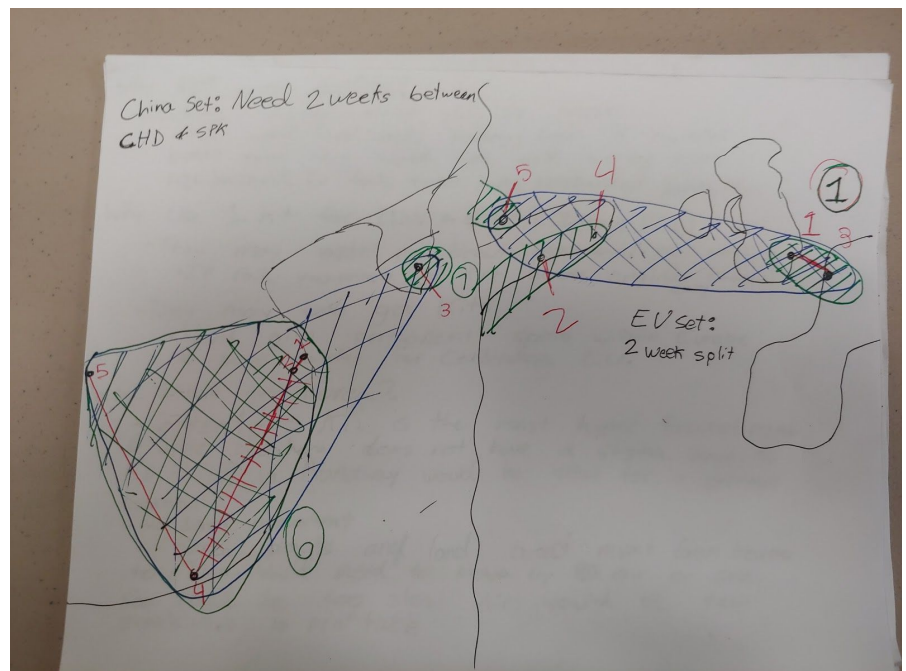
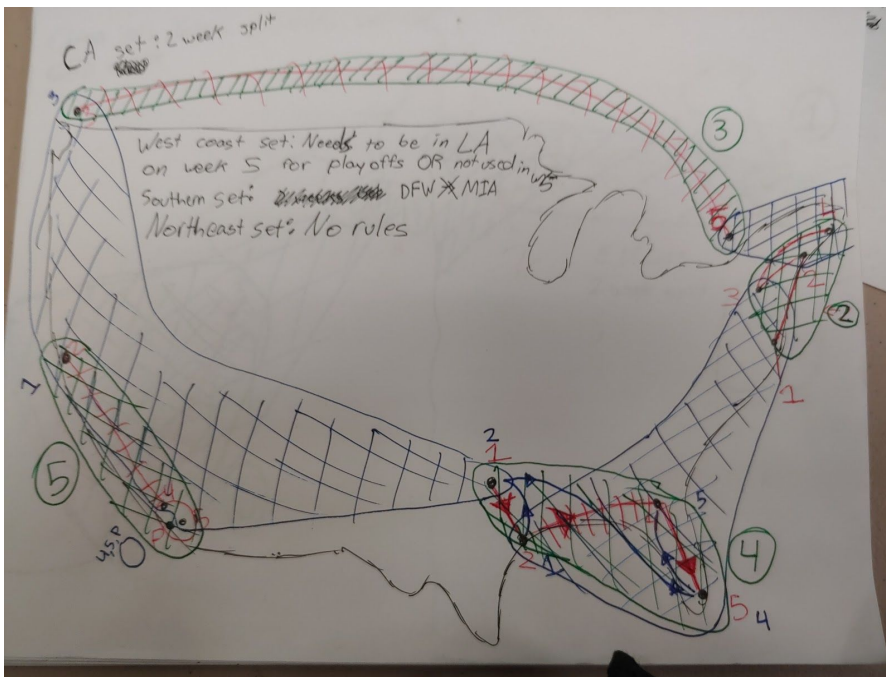
Spark

Dragons

Dynasty

Charge

All of these regions fit into a very nice set when looked at on a geographical level:



These 4 divisions all fit nicely when you think of the league less like the NBA with a set arena and all the bells and whistles that go with them, and more like a traveling show that can go from city to city, similar to WWE.

Within each stage, each team will play 8 games, 2 per week with 1 week off per stage. Of those 8 games, 2 will be in their home city. Each team will host 1 week per stage, and 4 teams will host each week. The broadcast will move between 2 of the cities per day, and each city will host 2 days of the 4 day week of games. Each team will have their home team, but also 3 other teams. The city will host 4 games over the week. 4 cities host, 4 games each, 16 games per week with 16 teams playing each week.

Now, for a better explanation, [\[LINK\]](#).

## Step 2, Logistics.

The biggest thing for the league is not the movement of players. Yes, it is important, but that is not what weighs most on the mind of Nate Nanzer.

Logistics: Noun. Definition - the commercial activity of transporting goods to customers.

Let me make something clear: LOGISTICS IS HARD. VERY VERY HARD. I know, I have worked in the industry with multiple major companies, figuring how to move everything under the sun from one place to another.

With that being said, it is possible to achieve this goal. It can be done. You just need to do it right.

What I believe OWL will do is not to have every city have a set of equipment that they can just simply pull out and use to broadcast. The amount of materials needed for OWL is much less than what is needed for NBA or MLS. You need monitors that are standardized. You need PC's that are standardized. You need the backend program (what makes the broadcast look like the broadcast), and copies of the game that run without being on the most current patch of the game, let alone the sponsored equipment. And that is just for the game. Don't forget the spectators within the arena who will watch and want to be immersed in the action just like the Blizzard arena.

Well, tough love. It isn't as simple as just picking it up and moving it to another location. What OWL will more than likely do is something like what Formula 1 does with their logistics operation [\[LINK\]](#) (watch this, then return to this essay). What Formula 1 teams do is have an essential kit that moves with the team expedited. No expenses cut, we need this in a different location RIGHT NOW. Do not stop, I don't care what it costs, get it there NOW speed. That being said, OWL works very similar to Formula 1 in many aspects. The movement of the players is ½ the challenge. On the plus side, OWL has less distance to travel. Downside, it is sometimes only 3 days to move. The equipment to host the games is also not cheap and it is UNIMAGINABLY vital to the success of the league as a whole for it to move smoothly.. If even 1 week was to be late, the league would be out MILLIONS of dollars in lost revenue, ad deals, the need to reschedule games, EVERYTHING would come to a halt and the broadcast of the league would be incredibly hindered.

What OWL will do is not give every team all the equipment they need, it will be too expensive and not cost effective when you consider that, under the scenario I am providing, the teams will not be home often enough to justify their storage cost. Instead, the league will have Essential Broadcast Equipment Sets (henceforth called "Kits"). These Kits are what are the essential equipment needed to host each weekend, so monitors, PC's, in-game broadcast equipment, all the stuff we know the league needs to make the experience we see become what it is. The other stuff, as in the screen to show the people in the arena the action, the cameras used by the camera operators, the cables for the headset used by the broadcasters, those will be rented as needed. That isn't considered essential, because most of that is mass produced and can be acquired with relative ease. A PC with the exact specs as the other 11 that are on stage, with a version of Overwatch that has all the bells and whistles needed to broadcast, a version that isn't up to date with the current patch, and all the other important things, cannot be acquired with relative ease.

What OWL can do is set a number of these Kits in specific places across the globe in strategic spots that can move to accommodate the various needs of the league. To illustrate this, Photo A is a look at the continental United States, the site of 13 of the 20 teams. Within this picture, there are multiple overlapping areas:

Blue: Same Division

Green: Same area used by a single Kit

Black Dot: Team's home city

Red Line: Movement of Kit

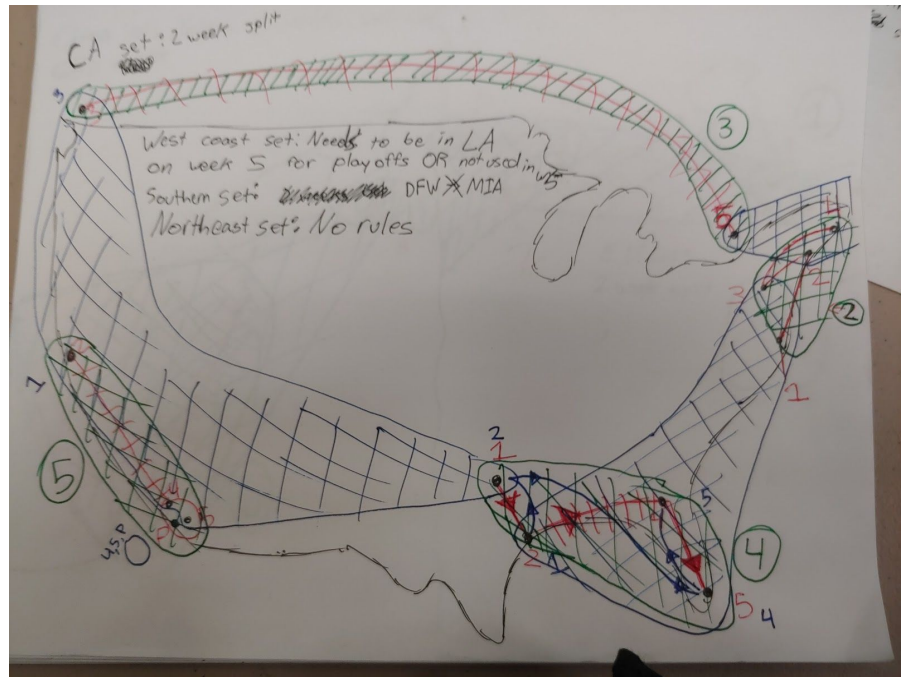
Within this map, there are 4 kits to service 13 teams:

Kit 2: US Northeast, PHL, NYXL, BOS, WSH

Kit 3: Canada, Toronto, Vancouver

Kit 4: US Southeast, DAL, HOU, ATL, FLA

Kit 5: US West Coast, VAL, GLA, SFS, Blizzard Arena

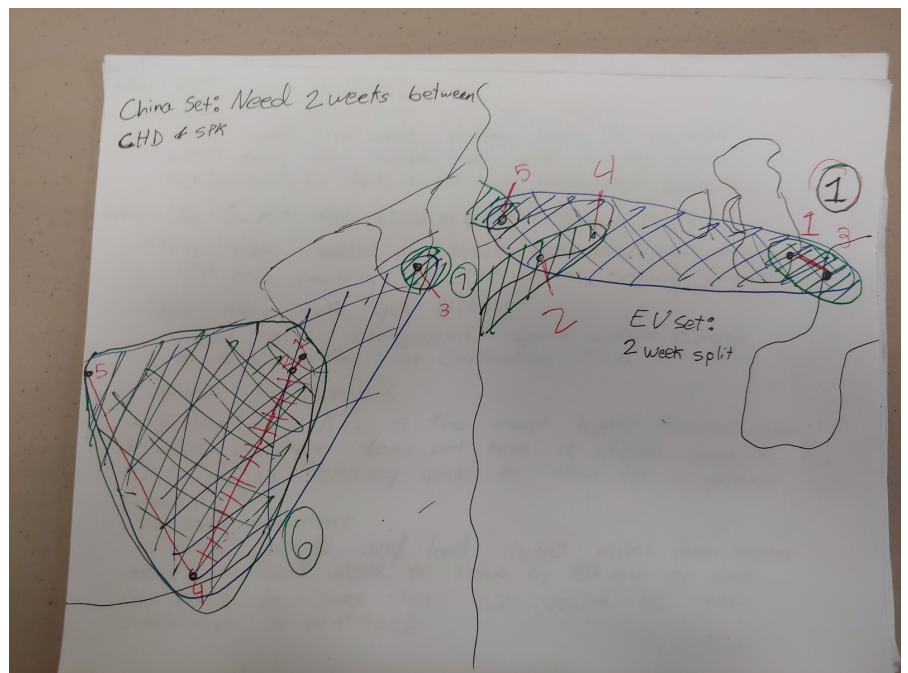


Within this map, there are 3 kits to service 7 teams (Map is split, part Asia, part West Europe):

Kit 1: Europe, LDN, PAR

Kit 6: China, SHD, HZS, CDH, GZC

Kit 7: Korea, SEO



The reason there are 7 kits is because one of the biggest things that will hinder the league is movement of equipment, especially across borders. Keeping kits within the same country will cut down on the transit time and make the movement much smoother.

Well why does London and Paris share a kit?

Because of EU laws, the movement of goods is very easy. However, it isn't set in stone as to what will happen with Brexit. So there may be a kit in both London and Paris if no deal is reached that allows for quick movement of the Kits.



Why does Seoul get their own kit?

Korea is one of the biggest markets for Overwatch. If there was ever a place that would benefit from having a permanent place to compete, it would be Korea. Korean Contenders could use the venue, or it could be rented out to other leagues to use.

If you want a logistics based answer, Korea is surrounded by water and a communist dictatorship to the north. The only way in is by either plane or ship. Planes are too expensive, and boats are too slow. With this much money on the line, you can't risk it.

### Step 3, Scheduling

Ok, we know what the Kits are for. How will the league run?

I already stated that the league will be 32 games with each team playing 2 per week, 1 bye week per stage, and 2 home games per stage. This is a theoretical hosting schedule for Season 3:

Note: I used Airport codes for most of these

IAH is Houston.

DFW is Dallas.

MIA is Florida.

Now, what this does not state is how the teams would travel to their games or what the actual schedule would look like (weeks off, which city they are in that week, etc.). This mainly shows which teams, in this schedule, would have home games that week. So, Week 1 LDN, WSH, DAL, and SHD would have home games. Week 2 is NYXL, HOU, SFS, and HZSPK. The schedule continues.

This 2nd picture shows the week the team has home games. You can see some patterns within the teams: Seoul and Vancouver always have week 3, Washington and London are sharing, Dallas always has them at the start or end of their stage. All of these may seem like I'm trying to make some sort of game with the team's schedule. However, all of this, this entire schedule, is based around the logistics of the Kits. They move in an important way from city to city with ZERO margin for error.

| Stage 1: | Atlantic N | Atlantic S | Pacific E          | Pacific W          |
|----------|------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| W1       | LDN        | WSH        | DFW                | SHD                |
| W2       | NYXL       | IAH        | SFS                | HZSPK              |
| W3       | PAR        | PHL        | VCVR               | SEO                |
| W4       | BOS        | ATL        | GLA                | <del>CDH</del> GZC |
| W5       | TOR        | MIA        | VAL                | CDH                |
| Stage 2: |            |            |                    |                    |
| W1       | TOR        | ATL        | GLA                | <del>CDH</del> GZC |
| W2       | NYXL       | MIA        | VAL                | <del>CDH</del> GZC |
| W3       | LDN        | WSH        | VCVR               | SEO                |
| W4       | BOS        | IAH        | SFS                | SHD                |
| W5       | PAR        | PHL        | DFW                | HZSPK              |
| Stage 3: |            |            |                    |                    |
| W1       | PAR        | PHL        | DFW                | CDH                |
| W2       | NYXL       | IAH        | SFS                | GZC                |
| W3       | LDN        | WSH        | VCVR               | SEO                |
| W4       | BOS        | MIA        | VAL                | SHD                |
| W5       | TOR        | ATL        | GLA                | HZSPK              |
| Stage 4: |            |            |                    |                    |
| W1       | TOR        | MIA        | <del>GLA</del> VAL | SHD                |
| W2       | BOS        | ATL        | <del>GLA</del> VAL | HZSPK              |
| W3       | PAR        | PHL        | VCVR               | SEO                |
| W4       | NYXL       | IAH        | SFS                | CDH                |
| W5       | LDN        | WSH        | DFW                | GZC                |

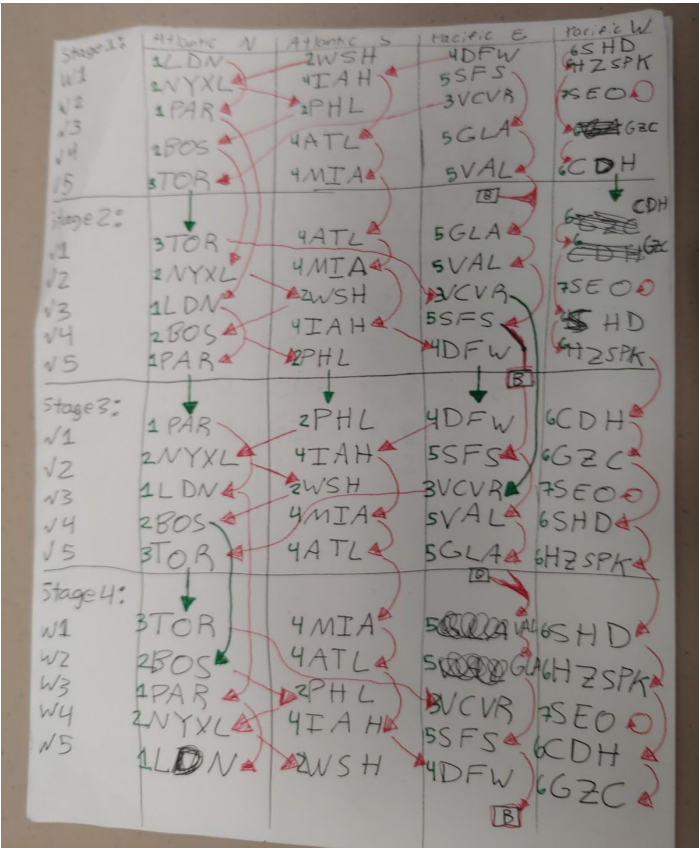
  

|                  |                                            |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| LDN- 1, 3, 3, 5  | WSH- 1, 3, 3, 5                            |
| TOR- 5, 1, 5, 1  | IAH- 2, 4, 2, 4                            |
| BOS- 4, 4, 4, 2  | PHL- 3, 5, 1, 3                            |
| NYXL- 2, 2, 2, 4 | MIA- 5, 2, 4, 1                            |
| PAR- 3, 5, 1, 3  | ATL- 4, 1, 5, 2                            |
| DFW- 1, 5, 1, 5  | SHD- 1, 4, 4, 1                            |
| SFS- 2, 4, 2, 4  | SPK- 2, 5, 5, 2                            |
| VCVR- 3, 3, 3, 3 | SEO- 3, 3, 3, 3                            |
| GLA- 4, 1, 5, 2  | CDH- 5, <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> , 1, 4 |
| VAL- 5, 2, 4, 1  | GZC- 4, <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> , 2, 5 |

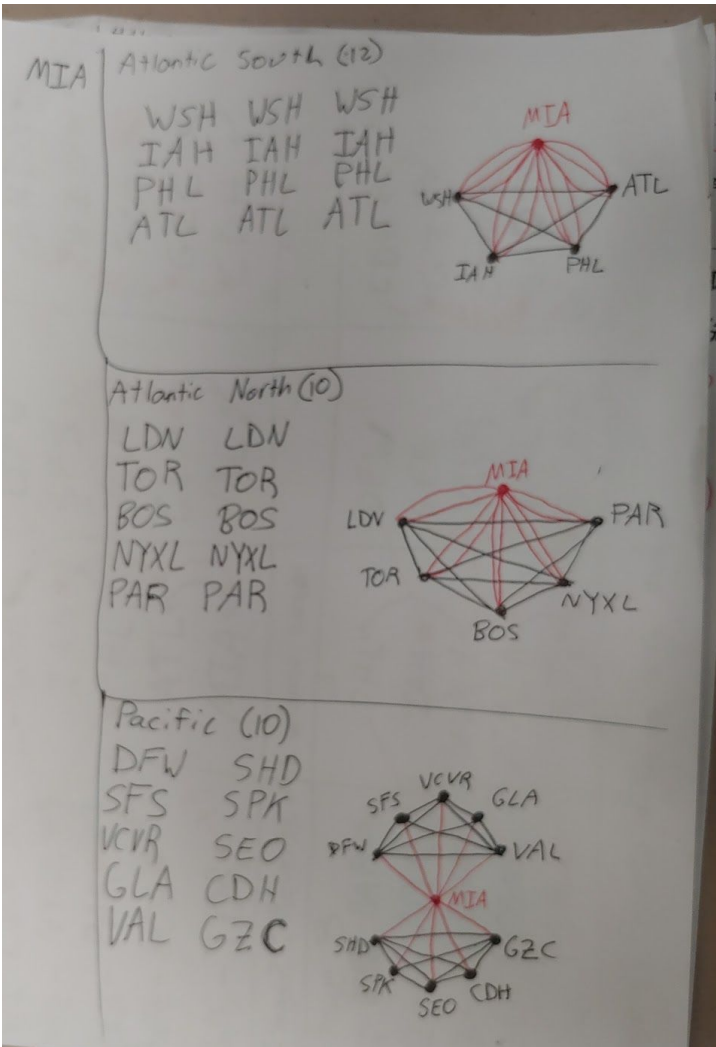
Hosting Cities & weeks of Stage

This 3rd picture is the same as picture 1, but with the movement of the Kits overlaid with it. The Red Arrows represent the kits. The green numbers next to the cities represent which kit they are using at that time. Green arrows show zero movement between the use of the kit. The “B” with a Box around it represents Blizzard Arena.

The Kits need to be able move with time to get there without rushing. This schedule has all movement of the Kits to within 12 hours of back to back week uses, and anything over 12 hours has 2 weeks to move (Toronto to Vancouver, Dallas to Miami, Chengdu to Guangzhou/Shanghai/Spark, Guangzhou to Chengdu/Shanghai/Spark).



Nate Nanzer did speak of the increased regional matches of the league. With 32 games in the season and a desire to cut down on travel, the breakdown of games will be as follows: 12 games against the same division (Atlantic S vs. Atlantic S), 10 games against the opposing division in the same conference (Atlantic S vs. Atlantic N.), 10 games against the opposing conference. (Atlantic vs. Pacific). Under this format, this is what the Florida Mayhem season would look like. Each match is represented by their name in black. Each red line represents 1 game between the 2 teams. More red lines mean more times meeting in the regular season. Black lines represent teams in the same division.



Under this format, you have some leeway in your ability to achieve what the league desires. Making the teams fly all across the planet will get tiring and could push players out of the league than what season 1 did. But, if you allow the teams to compete in what is effectively a neutral arena, meaning neither team is the home team, you destroy any need for the teams to travel as far. Chengdu vs. London, opposite sides of the world, could theoretically meet Stage 2 Week 5. Shock vs. Dallas, Chengdu vs. London on Thursday, Chengdu vs. Dallas, Shock vs. London on Saturday. Now, in 1 week, London has completed 2 of their 10 cross conference games. You do that once or twice a stage, the games rack up and you aren't dragged down by jet lag.

Under this, you can also service fans of teams who are not the home team. We all have the friend who has never been to New England who loves the Patriots. That exists within the OWL. I love Florida Mayhem, but Houston is awesome and Fusion is fun to watch. In season 2, Chengdu has captured the love of everyone. You bring in more teams to spice up each time you are at home, you can drive up ticket prices.

All of these changes and ideas are built in a way to make money. It can be done, but it needs to be done correctly. There is money that can be made. If OWL can do it correctly, it will succeed and will be the template for the future of Esports.